

# Brethren Evangelist

"I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."—Jesus

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## Editorial

### The Spirit of Christ in the Heart

The apostle Paul makes the very emphatic statement that if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his. At all times and in all places the Christian should be in possession of this self same Spirit, and the Spirit in possession of him, which is at once the spirit of sweetest love, beautiful humility, tenderest sympathy, kindest feeling, loving compassion, childlike trust, simple obedience and humble submission to the divine will. But if there be one time and one place when we should have a larger measure of this Spirit than at any other time and place, it is when we meet together in conference for mutual fellowship, for the worship and service of the Most High God, thru the adoption of such methods and the use of such means that look to the faithful execution of the work whereunto he has called us. May that Spirit rule in its largest measure in the hearts and lives of those who compose the National Conference of the Brethren church in this the last year of the nineteenth century. "And now what does the Lord require of thee but to do justly, love mercy and to walk humbly before thy God."

### The Society and the Individual

The multiplication of societies, orders, leagues, unions, or whatever other label may be given associations for special objects, seems likely to sink the importance of the individual. The problems of life are thus divided out, classified, delivered over to the said unions, settled, solved, dissolved and dissipated into thin air. Now so far from raising any objection to this idea of universal organization, we commend it in the highest terms as the only rational and effective idea for doing the world's work. It is the military idea, affording the nearest approach to its

discipline, its concentrated force and brilliant results. There is no question that the organized and disciplined regiment can do more than the mob, or more than the individual, however splendid his talent or untiring his industry, but it is on condition that the individual, or every individual, in the association becomes more effective because of his connection with it. There is a manifest tendency in society work to sink the responsibility of the individual. There is an ever present tendency in human nature to shift responsibility, and if the society as a mass is regarded by its individual members as a sort of substitute, an entity which will move of itself, do all the work there is to do, while we its atoms, or rather its ciphers, look on from our comfortable shady places, the end will be disappointment and demoralization.

The society fulfills its mission only when it trains its individual members to the highest efficiency, and then gets every one at work at a definite task and keeps them at work in thorough earnest. To do this there must be the strictest discipline, just such discipline in fact as prevails in the methods of the salvation army. The president of the society should be its captain, and the members his soldiers, and there should exist between them the same relationship as in the household of the centurion, who being a man in authority, having men under him, said to this man, "go, and he goeth, and to another, do this, and he doeth it." Nothing less than this is effective discipline. The elective leadership and the pastoral superintendence is a sufficient safeguard against all possible abuses and there need be no more friction than there is in the loose jointed discipline which marks most of our organizations. Every society should be like a steam hammer in the hands of a skillful operator, a tireless, irresistible, direct, inexhaustible force to break in pieces wickedness, and to hammer out the problems of reform which present themselves in every community and in every church.